South Pasadena Public Library
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES
June 23, 2014

CONVENE:
Board President Brendan Durrett called the special meeting of the Library Board of Trustees of the South Pasadena Public Library to order in the Library Community Room on June 23, 2014 at 7:06 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Trustees Present	Also Present
Brendan Durrett, President	Hilary Straus, Assistant City Manager
Constance Lue, Secretary	Richard D. Schneider, MD, Councilmember
Ann Penn, Trustee	Steve Fjeldsted, City Librarian
Andy Lippman, Trustee	Barbara Posner, Senior Librarian/Support Services
	Maida Wong, Senior Librarian/Children's Services
	Chelsea Clark, Reference Librarian
	Sean Faye, Administrative Secretary

EXCUSED:　　　　Ed Pearson, Vice President

MINUTES: The minutes of the Special Meeting of May 19, 2014 were reviewed – Constance Lue indicated a comment she had made at that meeting had not been included in the minutes. That statement expressed that Constance supports the consultant's recommendations and a good starting point for the Board of Trustees' deliberations would be to agree upon how we will respond to the new community priorities as stated in her presentation and then conduct a careful examination of the individual recommendations from a common frame of reference. This has been adjusted in the May 19, 2014 Special Board Minutes.

MSC: Constance Lue/Ann Penn – all approved, as corrected.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. **Development of Policy Direction on Library Operations Study** – Assistant City Manager Hilary Straus said that this is the absolute beginning of the process of implementing the recommendations of the Library Operations Study and that this is a milestone in our journey. Hilary encouraged the Board to view this meeting as an opportunity to advance the conversation and see if a consensus could be found on the 28 recommendations listed on the Library Operations Study matrix that he produced and that was distributed to the Board and Library Staff. This will be the first attempt to determine a starting place and Hilary expressed great interest in what the Board had to say. Once the Board has weighed in on all 28 items the recommendations will go before the City Council for their approval.

    Brendan Durrett indicated the column on the matrix listed as "Executive Staff" and asked who that consisted of. Hilary replied that he and Steve Fjeldsted comprise the Executive Staff. Hilary then said that the timeline in which all 28 recommendations could be implemented will be a minimum of two years. The purpose of this and future Library Operations Study meetings is to establish where the Board stands with an understanding that these goals will be revisited on a quarterly or biannual basis by the City Council as things continue to develop.

Hilary said that the first 7 of the 28 recommendations are technology based, and it will require a stem-to-stern review of the City's IT program. The Library is the second biggest user of IT technology in the City, with the Police Department as the largest. Our contract with our current IT Staff, which has been reactive with very little advanced planning, is nearing an end and the City Council will conduct an assessment to identify our needs to consider other IT firms.

Constance Lue asked how shifting and realigning resources will be done to develop these recommendations. Hilary replied it would be accomplished partly through fundraising and partly by reallocation of existing funds. Andy Lippman asked if someone on the Library Staff would be trained to handle IT issues and Hilary replied that he is considering that option. In response to Constance's questions about the dates listed under the Proposed Implementation Strategy column, Hilary said under the presumption that a consensus can be reached with the Board, we will then come back to prioritize dates and expectations. Steve said that upon approval, Joan Frye Williams' "change factor" will be applied to further determine the cost and priority of implementing her recommendations.

Brendan asked the Library Staff if there was anything they wanted to say before the technology recommendations were considered. Senior Librarian Maida Wong said that some of the recommendations were inter-related and that there were a lot of unknown factors, making it difficult to plan how to incorporate those changes. Maida continued that our current Wi-Fi is slow and unreliable and that adding tablets and more computer workstations will cause it to crash more often. Senior Librarian Barbara Posner added that some of the recommendations are doable and Local History Librarian Chelsea Clark said that some of the recommendations would be good for both the Library Staff and the Board.

1. **Offer reliable Wi-Fi coverage** – Hilary agreed with Maida's comment about the Library's Wi-Fi and said that this is a practical problem. He said that it wouldn't be an expensive fix and could be done quickly. Brendan asked if the money could be made available to purchase better hardware and Steve replied that the Mullen and Romine Estate Trusts could be applied to this, as well as money from the California State Library that hasn't been earmarked or allocated yet. Hilary thought the expense of this equipment could be absorbed within the existing budget, but will work with Bill Harder of Oz Technologies to communicate with the Library Staff and assess the needs.

        Executive Staff Priority – A   **LBT Priority - A**

2. **Upgrade PCs to run current operating system** – Hilary said this is a City-wide issue involving a possible delay in acquiring licensing and that it would be prohibitively expensive to do in one fell swoop. It will have to be done with a phased approach and agreed that it must be done. Chelsea Clark spoke of issues of software compatibility where patrons were unable to open documents from their home computers at Library workstations. Hilary acknowledged that problem and offered that he was wary of converting to the Cloud as a solution, citing security issues that would need further consultation. Constance Lue asked if the speed of Library IT improvements was dependent on City Hall's IT initiative and acquiring a new IT Staff. Hilary agreed with that statement. Dr. Schneider asked if the contract with Enterprise Licensing would be short term or long term, to which Hilary replied it would be long term. Ann Penn said that she thought the first two recommendations could be done simultaneously. Hilary said that computers will undergo RAM updates until a new IT staff is secured.

        Executive Staff Priority – B   **LBT Priority – A**

3. **Add tablets and/or portable devices to bring Internet workstations up to 1 for every 1,000 residents** – Hilary said that he envisions a scenario similar to the Apple store model with roving staff with

portable devices to assist patrons, but not in a way that excludes other methods staff use to help the public. Ann Penn asked if these tablets would be for staff or for patrons and Steve replied that they would be for both. Hilary said the emphasis would be to loan them out to the public. Andy observed that this would also be tied in with our IT support and predicted it would take two years or more to put this objective into action. Hilary agreed that the timeline may need to be adjusted. Ann Penn said that many people in the South Pasadena community already have their own tablets. Hilary replied that we could start with 5-10 devices and see what the demand is. Ann thought that was a good suggestion, but didn't consider this to be a top priority.

Executive Staff Priority – A   LBT Priority - B

4. Expand Library social media presence beyond simple event announcements on social media to more varied content –City Manager Sergio Gonzalez recently informed Steve that the Library will be allowed to have both its own Facebook and Twitter page, which will be a sea change from our present situation. Hilary said that he agrees with the consultant's recommendations and is aware that IT staff will need to be made available to help the Library reach this goal. Paula Knop's name was mentioned as a potential lead for this project. Chelsea Clark stated that we currently have a multi-tier approach to posting on social media which delays the immediacy of it. Brendan added that it is not very responsive and there's little opportunity to maintain a dialogue. Steve said he is working on a draft policy on this subject. Hilary added that someone would have to serve as a Webmaster and bear responsibility for postings and to review it periodically. Ann Penn said that we can make changes and improvements as they happen but the focus right now should be on developing the Library's website.

Executive Staff Priority – A   LBT Priority - B

5. Install at least 1 self-checkout station per 100,000 annual circulation – Hilary said that this would also be dependent on securing IT staff, but based on the statistics he reviewed, we should consider installing at least four self-checkout stations. Brendan asked if the goal was to have no human presence at the checkout. Hilary replied that there should always be a person there for assistance. Andy Lippman suggested that we start with one self-checkout station to help our patrons get accustomed to the technology. Steve remarked that 80-90% of libraries in the LA County area have either started or are planning on installing self-checkout stations and the expectation for them will continue to grow over time as they become further established. Brendan said that he's not opposed to the idea; he's just against not having people present since libraries are known for their customer service, especially the Children's Department. Maida Wong added that the self-checkout technology won't work on lost books or situations where a patron owes a fine and that the need for qualified personnel would remain. Barbara Posner said that the self-checkout stations themselves cost $4,000 and the software, including the initial set-up, could cost $20,000. Hilary added that a centralized IT department could respond to any issues related to this technology. Steve suggested that it's become a common position in libraries to hire their own IT staff. Barbara Posner's name was mentioned as someone that could lead this effort. Andy asked if it was against City regulations to allow volunteers to do this. Hilary replied that he would have to review the City's processes and formalities related to background checks to see if this was possible. Steve said that it was a phased integration as libraries made their transition from card catalogues to computers and that this change will not occur overnight. He continued that Joan Frye Williams' point was to free up staff for other tasks. Brendan repeated his support, but cautioned that he didn't want it to compromise our customer service.

Executive Staff Priority – B   LBT Priority - B

6. Look into exchanging some reference (staff) hours for IT support hours – Brendan asked if the goal was to have the existing Reference Staff to also do IT related assignments. Steve said that one of Joan Frye Williams' recommendations was to consider that option. Maida asked if other staff would be needed

to answer reference questions if the reference department were to become more IT-based. Hilary said it would be an opportunity for cross-training, but that further study would be needed and that a review of our current organization would be in order. Steve said another recommendation from Joan Frye Williams was to have patrons set appointments to speak with Reference Librarians. Constance Lue asked what information would be needed to make such decisions and said more data would be needed. Steve said that he has seen data that indicates a decrease in reference questions being asked, both at this Library and around the State of California. Dr. Schneider asked if the Library has any experience with cross-training and IT support. Barbara replied that the staff has that experience. Steve agreed and said that Barbara does a lot to maintain the servers and that the Library has been too dependent on Joe Quintana. He added that cross-training could benefit us all. Dr. Schneider asked if Joan Frye Williams wanted staff members to be entirely focused on IT support or if she wanted staff to incorporate that into their daily tasks. Maida said that the staff already does a certain amount of technical trouble shooting. Hilary said that this is also dependent on having a strong IT program and that is goal is to have proactive representation on each City department.

Hilary would like an IT analyst and an IT technician to work with each executive staff. Constance said that having an in-house IT technician would be an added value for the Library and the public. Steve said that he has seen many job descriptions for IT personnel at other libraries and that they don't require a Master's Degree in Library Science. Brendan asked if we should look beyond just the reference staff for these skills. Hilary said he would interview the staff to get a clearer picture. Ann Penn suggested crossing out the word "reference" in this recommendation, but Hilary replied that Joan Frye Williams specifically identified the Reference Division for this goal and that it would need further investigation to see what Joan meant. Brendan offered that Joan may have been cognizant of the decline in reference questions or that she may think that's all our Reference staff does. Andy Lippman said this discussion will need a lot of examination. Constance Lue agreed that it will require very careful and deliberate study. Ann Penn reminded the Board that these priorities could change as the recommendations are put into effect. Dr. Schneider thought there were too many questions at this time to give this recommendation a priority ranking. Hilary said he would gather more information from Joan about this.

Executive Staff Priority – B   LBT Priority - TBD

7. Re-invent the Library's website as a full service e-branch – Hilary thought this would be a good project for Chris Castruita, a Management Aide in the City Manager's office, to take the lead on. Ultimately a web consultant would need to be hired as this would be an enormous project with at least a 2 year timeline. Brendan asked if this would be a full website for the Library and Hilary said it would be. Steve added that most city and county websites have a mobile version for handheld devices and that we do not. Hilary admitted this will require further examination. Steve clarified that this would not replace staff members and would help convert some important Library functions into more mobile activities. Ann asked if an app would be developed for the Library and Chelsea said that a mobile module from SirsiDynix exists. Barbara said that having an option of making payments online would definitely reduce lines at the Circulation Desk. Hilary said that would be something to look into. Brendan asked how expensive this would be and Hilary replied that it would cost between $40,000-$50,000 to get the project launched and a fiscal analysis for each website feature.

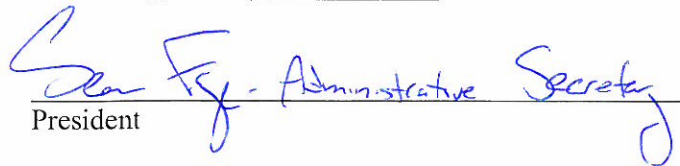**Executive Staff Priority – C   LBT Priority – C**

NEXT MEETING: The next regular meeting for the Library Board of Trustees will be on 7/24/14 in the Ray Bradbury Conference Room at the Library at 7 p.m. The next Special Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees will be on 7/14/14 in the Ray Bradbury Conference Room at the Library at 7 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

The special meeting of June 23, 2014 was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Minutes approved _____ as written.
Minutes approved _____ as corrected.

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President